

**NANCY L. WORLEY
SECRETARY OF STATE**



**First Floor State Capitol
Suite S-105
600 Dexter Avenue
P.O. Box 5616
Montgomery, AL 36103-5616
Office (334) 242-7206
Fax (334) 242-4993**

State of Alabama

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Contact: Denise Cornwell

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334-242-7228

334-242-7205

Secretary of State Nancy Worley announced today the selection of Diebold Election Systems, a company specializing in election data information management, to implement Alabama's new statewide voter registration system. Worley plans to begin negotiations with Diebold representatives immediately. Under the federally-mandated Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which became law in Alabama in 2003, each state is required to create, develop and maintain a statewide, uniform, centralized voter registration system, housed with the state's Chief Election Official.

Diebold was selected on Friday, May 27, 2005, after an extensive review and selection process was conducted to locate the best company to implement Alabama's new voter registration system. "Taxpayers want accountability in government and value for their tax dollar," Worley explained. "Diebold offered Alabama taxpayers the best quality and value and that was a major reason for their selection." The Diebold proposal was 2.30 million dollars, almost half the cost of EDS/Syscon's submission of 3.88 million dollars, and ESS/Unisys' submission of 3.92 million dollars.

The Secretary of State further noted, "Diebold has years of experience working with local election officials. Their experienced personnel in Alabama will effectively coordinate the implementation of this new system. Diebold voting systems are used in many counties throughout the country. "If we reach agreement with Diebold on the new statewide system, each Alabama county can join me on equal footing with the new system. This effort will be a fresh start toward making voter registration as up-to-date as possible in Alabama," Worley added.

Worley complimented the efforts of many individuals and groups who reviewed the proposals and she praised Rex McDowell, Alabama's Assistant Finance Director. "Numerous citizens as well as Rex McDowell played a vital role in this search process; we have often relied on Mr. McDowell's expertise and spirit of cooperation as we have worked together to review the companies seeking to implement Alabama's new centralized voter registration system."

Alabama's new statewide voter registration system will replace the current Alabama Voter Information Network (ALVIN) System, which was implemented almost 20 years ago. Meanwhile, over 30 county election officials bypassed the ALVIN system and purchased independent, county-based voter registration systems. When the new voter registration system is implemented, several state agencies will be working together to streamline voter registration efforts throughout Alabama.

Alabama's new system will electronically connect the voter registration database, maintained by the Alabama Secretary of State, with the following agencies, the Alabama Department of Public Safety, the Administrative Office of Courts, and the Alabama Department of Public Health. Connection to the Department of Public Health will assist in the removal of dead individuals from the voter rolls, while the electronic relationship with the Administrative Office of Courts will provide for the accurate removal of felons. Registrars will also be able to compare voter registration information with driver's license records maintained by the Alabama Department of Public Safety.

Worley commented, "Implementing a new statewide voter registration system is a major step toward increasing public confidence in the accuracy of voter lists and the honesty of Alabama's elections."

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